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**LENS 1**- *Dear Mr. Henshaw* Transmedial Response

Purpose: To explore the aspects of an art medium as an interpretation of literature

Audience: Children, Teachers, & Parents

Engagement: Exploring the possibilities of expressing ideas and interpretations symbolically through other forms of genres

Genre: Transmedial Expression

There are a great deal of benefits to be explored while interpreting literature such as, *Dear Mr. Henshaw* written by Beverly Cleary. I chose this genre regarding a transmedial interpretation because this serves as a healthy opportunity for one to articulate his or her feelings through many forms such as art, music, videos, and photography. Although interpretations of literature in writing are effective, this alternative opens the doors of expression and invites children to actively convey their emotions, thoughts, and ideas through any medium they see fit. I firmly believe that everyone is unique and with that, learning styles vary and emotions are spoken differently. This genre will aid the students who have trouble with writing and although grammar and spelling are important, I’m not convinced it is the best option for all children.

In order to gain better insight of each child’s needs and point of view, open interpretation of literature not only benefits the student themselves, but the teachers as well. Once the child has articulated his or her point of view, the teacher can then analyze the work and can effectively aid the student’s learning even more. As stated in *The Pleasures of Children’s Literature* written by Perry Nodelman and Mavis Reimer, “Nevertheless, exactly because literature is an interconnected network of texts and responses to them, the child and the English professor can learn from, and gain pleasure from, each other’s responses.” (27) As emphasized in that sentence, communication between student and teacher is crucial for learning and expressional growth through transmedial interpretations.

An array of insights may be attained from transcribing symbolism in art, photos, and videos. Perhaps a student can identify with a photo as an expression of an event in a story he or she is reading. The photo, from their point of view, may appear more realistic and may connect with an event occurring in their personal lives. With expression through this medium, there is a therapy-like effect the student feels and by identifying symbolism through a picture. He or she is exploring a relationship tied to an event or experience in which frames their opinions and more importantly their outlook on life. With this new found “room for explanation”, a number of students are reached on a level not easily attained before. By allowing a more loose individual translation of literature through transmedial interpretation, the child is in a stress free environment and can effectively state what meaning they find in a unique, yet beneficial manner. What better than a child being comfortable with his or her own thought process and expression?

Although a positive step towards the ultimate goal of universal expression among our youth, there are some challenges that may occur as well. If every student were given “free reign” so to speak when it came to expression through this genre, there could be a decrease in the emphasis on writing, spelling, and grammar which could adversely affect their adult careers. Despite this possible setback, there aren’t a whole lot of other apparent negative attributes when it comes to allowing children to openly communicate their opinions or feelings through transmedial interpretations. In a nutshell, the idea of transforming a written piece of literature such as *Dear Mr. Henshaw* into a multitude of medium assortments will convey a positive outlet for all students to express thoughts, feelings, and opinions on an open, judgment-free horizon, thus giving our youth the ultimate power of expression through any medium they see fit. After all, our children and youth are the leaders of the future and possess the ability to change the world through their assertions.

Works Cited:

* Cleary, Beverly, and Paul O. Zelinsky.*Dear Mr. Henshaw*. New York: Morrow, 1983. Print.
* Nodelman, Perry, and Mavis Reimer. *The pleasures of children's literature*. New York: Longman, 1992. Print.